Party Organizer

"The program of our Party must be brought to the millions. One of the best means of recruiting workers into our ranks is in the very heat of the struggle, in strike struggles, in unionization campaigns, in the united front struggle against war and fascism, in the struggle to build the people's front, the Farmer-Labor Party . . . . The way to develop mass recruiting is to recruit in every locality, in every organization. It is on this basis that our Party must develop a nationwide mass recruiting campaign."—(Resolution of the Ninth Convention of the Communist Party, U. S. A.)

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PARTY ORGANIZER

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On With Recruiting!

DURING THE MONTH of October, over 2,300 new members were recruited into our ranks, 1,000 above the average monthly quota. This shows that though the recruiting is going on, it has not yet gained sufficient impetus. California and Philadelphia are still in the lead. They are the districts which very probably will fulfill their quotas by January 21.

In this issue of the PARTY ORGANIZER there are a few instructive articles which prove that when the leading committees organized the drive, guided and checked the daily activities of the units, and made the recruiting drive one of their major tasks, Party recruiting showed results.

If we consider the possibilities that the election campaign afforded us, we cannot be satisfied with the results. For this reason we must redouble our efforts, while there is still time, to utilize the numerous good contacts made during the election campaign among workers, farmers and professionals.

The main weakness still lies in the lack of initiative shown by the units and by individual Party members, especially in the trade union field and in the shop. From the trade unions alone, especially from American Federation of Labor unions, we should be able to get thousands of new recruits. But these potential recruits must be contacted, must be invited to join our ranks. We must find ways of getting closer to them—distributing literature to them, inviting prospects to special meetings where leading comrades will address them.

In this respect, active Party members in trade unions and industrial units should play the important part. Shop units, especially in those industries where the organizational drive is going on, the steel, auto, and rubber industries, must be activized to the fullest extent and their recruiting activities guided daily in connection with the trade union drive.

Branches will be able to intensify recruiting only to the extent that they solve their inner organizational problems, when Party members in the various organizations become active, when they work under the guidance of branch bureaus and to the extent

that these are the people whom we want, whom we must train, whom we must develop in such a manner that they themselves will become an integral part of our organization in carrying out our work.

If we would only understand that these new people are the ones who best understand what the youth desire, how to approach other youth, how to recruit them! They are in a position to teach us—the older comrades—what they expect of the Y.C.L. It is with this in mind that we should pay our major attention to our new membership and utilize them to the best of their ability in work they like best.

Another great shortcoming in our methods of work is the fact that our branches lack sufficient knowledge of the conditions of youth in their locality. The material we use is of too general a character, mainly utilizing the national issues. This lack of knowledge on local issues limits the effectiveness of our work in the specific territory and thereby limits our contact with young people in the neighborhood. The thing that can interest the majority of the young people is specific local issues which they themselves are confronted with. To cite an example:

In Section 22, lower East Side, 70 young people were recruited in one branch during one week. At one of the branch meetings, these new young comrades were quite noisy and restless until one of the speakers mentioned the terrible housing conditions existing in the neighborhood. Suddenly all noise stopped, attention was riveted on the speaker. We can evidently hit home when we speak of the things the young people are most acquainted with and therefore most interested in.

One of the weaknesses in our work is the laxity in developing economic struggle for the needs of the youth. The way in which we can recruit the most important and decisive section of young people, particularly among the trade union and Negro youth, is chiefly through constructive struggle around local economic issues. (This should be raised not alone for the Y.C.L. but also for Party comrades.)

In the Jamaica section, we have a new young Negro comrade who has been in the League for approximately seven weeks and has already recruited four young people into the League. When commenting on her activity her answer was, "Before I joined the League, the Y.C.L. conducted a series of militant actions in the neighborhood against Negro discrimination. Through this activity, I joined the League and continued similar struggles to-

gether with other comrades. I am now firmly convinced that the Y.C.L. is the only defender of Negro rights."

Such statements prove conclusively that only on the basis of action can we recruit hundreds upon hundreds of young Negroes into our League. Such activity must, however, be consistent in order to hold our membership.

A very important factor which retards our progress is that we do not have enough experienced personnel in the League. This lack of personnel is keenly felt in our branches today which are in the process of reorganization. In an attempt to broaden our branch activity, in an attempt to institute new methods and ideas in our educational and cultural work to suit the needs and desires of the young people, our comrades failed to link up this transitional period with our mass activity. We will be successful in reorganizing our branches only insofar as we have mass contact with a large section of youth, only insofar as we conduct militant activity around specific economic issues that face the young people today.

Another result of weak leadership is the manner in which we assign comrades to certain work. There is a tendency in the League to assign people to work which is not best suited for their talents and for their development. This, of course, is because we have not yet learned to understand the problems of our new members, we have not yet learned what particular work our new comrades are interested in so that we can assign them to work on the basis of their abilities and interests. If we are really concerned about developing personnel, if we want to see new comrades coming to the fore, then it is necessary for us to establish an organizational apparatus which will be in a position to train and educate our new people, which will allocate our comrades, which will lay a foundation in the League to develop and turn out new leaders every day.

It is an obvious established fact that the problem is *people—personnel.*

The great obstacle standing between us and the newly recruited comrades is the lack of a comradely approach to them. It is necessary for us to understand that each new comrade has a different background and therefore different and varied problems—problems which we must endeavor to solve. We must patiently explain over and over again why we participate on picket lines, why we sell the *Champion of Youth,* why we hold demonstrations, etc. Every small phase of our activity necessitates explanation to our new comrades, so that they can under-

stand the correctness of this activity and on the basis of self-conviction participate in the work.

We can already see positive results in the sense that a greater part of our membership, particularly our leading comrades, are taking a much more active interest in new members: membership committees, composed of leading developed comrades, are being established in our branches; there is more efficiency in organizing interesting new members' classes.

With more of this type of work, we can say with much confidence that our League in New York will be strengthened both organizationally and politically to such an extent that we will be in a position to build our organization to 15,000 by January 1.

Baltimore Sets the Pace For Party Recruiting!

EARL DIXON

From Baltimore comes a report this month that demonstrates once again that mass recruiting is not to be regarded as a phrase in a resolution but as a concrete and important possibility for our entire Party. All credit to Baltimore and may it continue to point the way to a mass Communist Party in America—and may it have many contestants for its leadership!—Ed.

THE SECTION COMMITTEE of Baltimore accepted a quota of 100 new members to be recruited during the period of the election campaign, August 1 to November 3. On October 30, in checking our records, we found that we had already 107 recruits and so a new quota of 75 was set to be fulfilled by Lenin Memorial, January 21. For the Baltimore Party this represents an increase of approximately 67 per cent in three months. During the month of August 12 new members were recruited, 51 in September and 44 in October. The great majority of the new members were won over during September and October when the election campaign activities were at the highest.

Who Are the New Members?

A check-up on the composition of the new recruits shows a broad representative group of the general population—largely

from basic industry. Eighty of the total come from such industries as steel, marine, auto, textile, coal mining, harbor workers, drydock, railroad, needle trades and common labor, the balance are from offices, there are four farmers, some scattered building trades, some intellectuals, etc. Twenty-five of our recruits came from territory outside of Baltimore; twenty-four from Allegheny county in the Western end of the state which includes Cumberland, second largest city of the state and a very important industrial center. In addition to the actual recruits the Party has established sympathetic friends in at least six other cities of the state.

The outstanding weakness of the composition is the comparatively small number of Negroes. Not more than 9 per cent or ten new members are Negroes.

Election Campaign Stimulates Party Growth

While it is true that the work of the Party through the last year has established new friends and brought many new contacts close to us, the main instrument that precipitated the comparatively large influx of new members was the activities of the election campaign. We feel that the work conducted in the recent campaign not only convinced those who had been brought close to us to join the Party but many new members came to us with whom we had no contact before. For example, 23 new members from Western Maryland were won directly as a result of the national broadcasts. We received letters from that place in answer to the first broadcast as well as letters from a number of other sections of the state. These letters were given personal, individual answers, copies of literature were sent out and a regular correspondence established. A leading comrade was sent to Cumberland for four days and returned with 19 applications. Another very good example of the broadcasts as a Party builder is shown in the case of the worker who came to our office asking for information about the Party. He told us that he had heard Comrade Browder on the radio and was convinced that his place was in the Party as an active worker.

Examples could be given in a number of cases showing that not only the radio, but the election work generally, brought us new members—the special distribution of literature at the steel mills to the Negro people, etc. It is necessary to note also that the organizing drive led by the Steel Workers Organizing Committee led to several new recruits in the steel and auto industries. Our comrades through personal contact with and care-

ful attention to workers in these industries succeeded in winning several new members. Comrades in the marine industry also gave special attention to winning new members by personal contact and calling special meetings of selected possible recruits, where the role of the Party was explained and recruits gained. Other methods included special radio parties, in halls open to the public and in homes. These parties, organized to hear our Party candidates, brought new contacts and a few recruits. Some of our fractions listed sympathizers and friends for the Party to concentrate its efforts upon.

Training New Members

The new growth of the Party presents us with a big problem. Many of the new members have only a vague idea of the Party and the Party here is small, the majority of the so-called "old members" have been in the Party not more than a year. Few trained forces are available to us. The problem confronts us of training and schooling the new members. We are trying to solve this problem and we realize that in our ability to do this lies the test of holding our new members and making of them a new, additional force to the Party core.

For the units newly established in Western Maryland, largely composed of coal miners, textile workers and laborers, we sent back the comrade who recruited them to organize the units, discuss with the members the principles of the Party program and organizations and to get them under way. Later a third visit was made, outlines for study classes were distributed with the necessary literature. An instructor sufficiently developed to lead the classes started the new units on their way. Regular visits are made at least once a month to go over all necessary matters.

In Baltimore we are using the month of November for teaching the lessons of the nineteenth anniversary of the Soviet Union, the basic principles of the Party and its program. The Workers School, now in preparation, will have special classes for new members on Principles of Communism and Party Organization.

For the Future—Further Steps

We have by no means exhausted the recruiting possibilities. In fact we feel that we have only begun, that the way has only just been opened up. Our plans for continuing to recruit and build the Party include the calling of all fractions, language

groups, trade union, etc., to work out with them lists of possible recruits and connections so that we can concentrate our efforts upon them. One fraction has drawn upon a list of 35 possible recruits upon whom it will concentrate. Each unit will follow the same procedure. That there exists the possibility of doing much greater work in this direction is shown by the fact that we have more than 100 contacts scattered throughout the state asking for information. Our limited forces have made it impossible for us to reach all of these people to date but we will reach them as rapidly as conditions will permit and as rapidly as we consolidate the gains made up to the present.

An outstanding example of recruiting work that will bring results for the future is that of two of our comrades who, while soliciting signatures to put our candidates on the ballot, made personal friends of a number of people. They have made regular visits to them since, taking literature and explaining each pamphlet. As this is being written these comrades report that two needle trades workers will be recruited through this work, tonight.

We are sure that the Party in Baltimore is on its way to establish once and forever a real party which will also bring forward a real force of local leaders. The election campaign has created a wide interest in our Party and made many new friends. It is up to us to reach these friends and build a real mass Communist Party.

Registration for 1937— Use It to Strengthen the Party!

THE REGISTRATION of the Party membership will take place the end of December. What are the main reasons for the registration of the membership every year, and the exchanging of membership books?

1. We aim, by taking an account of the membership of our Party, to find out how many of the members drop out of the Party for one reason or another.

2. To strive to get all the membership in good standing.

3. To find out the change in the social composition of our organization.

These three main points decide the tasks facing the Party organizations in the months previous to and during registration.

There is no need to repeat the fact that there is a large turnover in our Party. Thousands and thousands of new members join and thousands and thousands leave our ranks. There are basic weaknesses which we have enumerated so many times, which, if corrected, would to a great extent reduce this high fluctuation.

In this article we will not deal with this specific problem. We will deal, however with only one aspect of this question, and that is—what organizational steps shall be taken in connection with the registration to get back the large number of members who have dropped out of the Party.

In preparing the registration, each neighborhood organization (branch, street unit and shop unit) of our Party should make up a list of all its members, whether they are in good standing or not. The list should contain all members who registered at the end of 1935, plus the members who have been recruited since the 1935 registration. The unit bureaus should check very carefully on the dues payment of each member. A committee of two should visit all those members who have not attended unit meetings for a long period of time, or who are in arrears for a long time. This committee should report back to the unit on each individual case.

No member should be dropped from the list before all possible means are exhausted to get him back into the Party. In each case, the unit as a whole should decide whether the member should be dropped or not, and should explain to the section committee why the members were dropped.

After going through the whole list of the Party unit, we should prepare the following form:

1936 BOOK NO.	NAME	DUES PAID TO WEEK NO.	REMARKS	1937 BOOK NO.

This list will be the basis for the registration. If the comrades really concentrate all their energy on getting back the members

dropped out before the registration, we could reduce the fluctuation tremendously.

During the month of December, a very close control should be established in each unit for dues payments. Every member of our Party must be paid up in dues. It will be difficult for individual members to pay up six or eight weeks' dues in one sum at the unit meeting when the registration takes place. If, in the remaining weeks, we approach every comrade who is in arrears, and make him pay up two or three weeks in one sum, he will be in good standing at the time of registration.

In many cases we can blame ourselves for losing members because we neglect to collect dues regularly from them. There are a number of members in each unit who for one reason or another cannot attend unit meetings regularly. As they stay away from the meetings, they fall back in dues payments also. If we would have a system in each unit which would enable us to collect dues from those members who do not attend unit meetings—such as going to their homes for dues collections—we could reduce the turnover to a great extent.

A member in arrears for six or eight weeks is a potential "dropped out" member of the unit. *Let's make every member of the Party a "paid-up" member.*

The registration will also help us to find out whether the Party really penetrated those sections of the working class which are the most important in the revolutionary movement. It will reveal the strength and weakness of the Party units. It will help us change the orientation of our work if the facts show that we do not have the desired composition in the unit.

The registration will help us build the Party in many factories where we have no Party organization today.

The registration is not a routine, administrative act. It has tremendous organizational and political importance. We must look upon it from that angle.

Every member of our Party should actively participate in carrying through the registration in the most efficient and effective manner. The members of the units should volunteer their full time to follow up members who have not attended meetings for a long period. Every member of our Party should attend the unit meetings when the registration takes place, and also see to it that they bring with them those who for one reason or another stay away from unit meetings. The remaining few weeks must be utilized for a real mobilization of the membership for registration. This mobilization will be led by

the unit bureaus, section committees and district committees, but, at the same time, the whole membership must give active support to the Party committees to make this mobilization 100 per cent effective.

New Party Dues Payments

THE NINTH NATIONAL CONVENTION of the Party decided to reduce dues payments. This decision is being put into effect beginning with January, 1937. Instead of weekly dues payments, we will have monthly payments. The International Solidarity payments have also been changed from once a month to once every four months.

The following contains necessary information for every Party member regarding dues, initiations, assessments, the International Solidarity payments, attendance and activity:

MEMBERSHIP

INITIATION

The initiation fee of each applicant for membership is 50 cents if his weekly wage is over $10.00. For those whose earning are less than $10.00 a week, or who are on relief, or housewives, the initiation fee is 10 cents. This amount is receipted for by an initiation stamp furnished by the Central Committee. Fifty per cent of the sale of the initiation stamp goes to the National Office and 50 per cent to the District Office. There is no extra charge to the new member for the membership book.

DUES

Each member pays dues monthly, based on the month's earnings. The dues are receipted for by dues stamps issued by the Central Committee. Dues stamps are issued in the following categories:

All members earning up to $10 a week ($40 a month) pay 10 cents a month.

All housewives pay 10 cents a month.

All earning between $11 and $25 a week (up to $100 a month) pay 50 cents a month.

All earning between $26 and $40 a week (up to $160 a month) pay $1.00 a month.

Members receiving over $40 a week (or over $160 a month) wages pay in addition to the regular $1.00 dues, additional dues at the rate of 50 cents for each $10.00 (or fraction).

The dues are proportioned as follows:

25% to the units.
20% to the sections.
20% to the districts.
25% to the center.
10% to the center for a special national trade union fund.

Members who are two months in arrears in payment of dues cease to be members of the Party in good standing. Members who are four months in arrears are stricken from the Party rolls.

ASSESSMENTS

All local or district assessments or collections are prohibited except by special permission of the Central Committee. Special assessments may be levied by the National Convention or the Central Committee. No member is considered in good standing unless he purchases such special assessment stamps.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

This is a special fund, contributed to by every member, as an act of our international solidarity with the Communist Parties of other countries that need our financial aid. Every member is to pay every four months an amount equal to one month's dues, based on the average of the previous four months' dues.

ATTENDANCE AND ACTIVITY

The rules of the Party provide that Party members attend the meetings of their Party organization regularly, participate in its activities, pay their dues regularly, and carry out the decisions of the Party.

Make the Industrial Units Vital Organizations!

ROSE WORTIS

AFTER MUCH DISCUSSION our last Party convention decided to make a change in the basic structure of organization and to allow the organization of industrial units. This change was made primarily to strengthen our work in the trade unions and to link up the general Party work with the concrete day-to-day work in the trade unions. In discussing the need of industrial units many of the trade union comrades argued:"Why should we spend time canvassing in the localities among people with whom we have no contact? This could be done much better through industrial units among workers in our trade unions where we have already established our prestige."

Against this argument many of us feared that the organization of such units would weaken the general work of the Party and that there would be a tendency of converting the industrial units into trade union fractions, or even progressive groups.

Generally we can say that although the industrial units have improved the work of the Party in many instances they have not entirely fulfilled our expectations. During the first few months of the organization of industrial units the growth was striking. However, most of the units showed a lack of persistence so that in recent periods the increase of the Party membership in the industrial units did not in any way exceed the growth of the street units, and in fact in some instances fell far below.

Industrial units which had the proper leadership and the proper guidance from the section not only served to strengthen our trade union work but also enabled us to bring in the various Party campaigns and to raise the political level both of the Party comrades and the masses among whom they work. However, in many industrial units the work has suffered greatly because the leading comrades who were most persistent in pressing for the organization of industrial units left them to shift for themselves once they were organized. The result was that not only the work of the unit suffered, but also its fraction work. Since the unit was synonymous with the fraction, poor work in the

unit resulted in much poorer work in the trade union. The recent elections have also shown that such units have not learned how effectively to link up the election campaign with the day-to-day problems of the unions and generally to build the Party in the trade unions. This weakness of the industrial unit to some extent accounts for the fact that the Party vote in New York City, although considerably increased, is not by any means in proportion to the great influence we wield among the masses of trade unionists. The same is also true on the question of Party recruiting.

Here are a few examples. In the moving picture industry there are three unions in the field—an A. F. of L. union, an independent union, and a company union. We had very weak fractions working in these unions, disconnected from one another. Very often the small fractions found themselves at dagger heads with one another in the application of the Party line in the unions. When the industrial unit was organized it had a membership of ten comrades. Today the unit has a membership of about thirty. The comrades were able to work out a unified policy in the struggle for the merger of the three unions, which is now on the point of being realized. There is no question that the unit has been an important factor in bringing about this unity. The comrades are issuing a Party bulletin dealing with trade union issues, as well as general Party campaigns. They have participated (although still weakly) in the election campaign, raising funds, organized a rally, etc. Today they have organized a class of moving picture operators in the Workers School involving not only Party comrades but many non-Party workers.

To be sure there are still many weaknesses in this unit. Most of the comrades are new in the Party and in the trade union movement. However, when we take into consideration the fact that the moving picture operators work until late at night and that the unit has to meet at midnight, we can definitely say that the good work done by this unit would have been impossible if the comrades had remained scattered throughout the street units. We can also say that the work done by the unit was possible because there were a number of Party comrades who were conscious of their responsibilities as Party members, were in frequent consultation with the section and helped to build the unit as a basic Party organization.

Another instance I want to cite is the pharmacist unit. This union is under Left-wing leadership. We had a poorly functioning

fraction and here, too, because of the late hours of work, the comrades were not a real factor in the work of the Party. Since the unit has been organized the membership has increased from about 25 to 45. The comrades actively participated in the election campaign, raised $250 for the campaign and distributed Party literature. They are now developing an excellent solidarity campaign for Spain in which they are involving not only the workers but many of the middle class, professional elements.

In the course of this work many internal difficulties, which threatened the very life of the unit, arose. It was only because the section was alive to the situation and assigned leading comrades to meet with the unit that the internal difficulties were adjusted and the unit is well on the way towards much better work.

As against these units there are far too many industrial units that cannot in the real sense of the word be considered the basic Party organization. Let me cite examples of some of the typically bad units.

Among the first units to be organized on an industrial basis were some of the Brooklyn painters' units. During the first period the units worked very effectively, recruiting many members and bringing the Party campaigns into the unions. However, after the honeymoon of its existence the leading comrades of the union became sluggish in their work and because of certain organizational difficulties in the section little attention was paid to the unit. This good unit which showed such great promise has been reduced to a bad fraction. Here is an example of one unit meeting.

The comrades opened the meeting stating that the section letter did not apply to them. A brief report on the local union was given, in the discussion the comrades brought up some personal grievances which are rarely settled to the satisfaction of anybody, and the meeting was adjourned. The bureau did not meet in advance to consider the section letter, to see which parts of it were applicable to this particular unit. It did not plan its work on the basis of its particular problems. The unit did not make arrangements for discussions on the various issues before the Party. It allowed personal grievances to come up that should have been settled either by the individual comrades or through the union. No wonder the unit ceased growing. The comrades hardly feel that they are an organic part of a revolutionary party. The poor functioning of the unit has weakened our position in the union. Despite the great victory

of the New York painters we were defeated in this local, which today is again in the hands of racketeers.

Another example of a bad unit—the Amalgamated. The comrades of the Amalgamated were among the most ardent supporters of industrial units and in fact were the first to get the consent of the district to organize such units. During the first few weeks the comrades were enthusiastic. They saw the possibility of organizing shop units through the industrial unit. They sold large numbers of Party pamphlets. They developed real Party consciousness. But this enthusiasm did not persist. The comrades busied themselves with the unit and began to neglect the rank-and-file movement and activities within the local. The industrial unit defeated its main purpose, namely, activizing the comrades in the trade unions. It slackened in its activities and became suspended in the air. So that today these comrades who were such strong advocates of industrial units are beginning to raise the question of dissolving the industrial unit and sending the comrades back into their street units.

The only explanation for this situation in the unit is that the comrades, instead of realizing that the work in the unions, the growth of the Party, can only take place through persistent and systematic activity, have a tendency towards looking for schemes to solves their very difficult problems. They used to attribute all their weaknesses in the union to the absence of an industrial unit; now they claim the fault lies altogether with the industrial unit. Evidently there is something fundamentally wrong with our work in the Amalgamated which cannot be solved through organization alone but by a more correct application of our policy to the new situation in the Amalgamated.

How can we explain that in the moving picture operators', the pharmacists', and the furriers' units, the results are different than in the painters and the Amalgamated? The above experiences show that the form of organization alone, although helpful towards improving the Party, does not in itself solve the problems of the inner life of the Party unit.

In addition to the proper form of organization it is necessary for the Party to help build up leadership and give the proper guidance to the unit. This is necessary for all units, but it is especially important for industrial units, as the comrades coming from one trade and absorbed in their trade union work, will show a tendency towards centering the discussions and

the work of the unit on purely trade union problems. Experiences show that if the industrial units are really to help advance the work of the Party, it is necessary in the first place for the leading comrades in the unions, who are familiar with the problems of the union, who understand the general line of the Party, to assume leadership in their units, to serve on the unit bureaus as they formerly did on the leading fraction, to act as unit organizers and generally lead the unit.

Secondly, it is necessary for the section leadership to give particular attention to the industrial units. The problems of the industrial units are very often different from those in the street units. It is necessary from time to time to call meetings of the unit organizers of the industrial units. The section trade union department, organized on the basis of representation from the leading industrial units in the section, familiar with the problems of the section, can be of great help in aiding the industrial units to exchange experiences. In those instances where this has been done, as in Sections 3 and 22, the comrades felt that these meetings have been of great help.

Therefore, in summing up our experiences we can say that the industrial unit is an effective means of increasing the Party influence and Party strength. To eliminate the existing weaknesses and to make the industrial unit more effective it is advisable (1) to organize the work of the unit in such manner that one meeting a month be devoted to trade union problems, (2) to organize the leadership of the unit, bureau and unit organizer, and comrades who have prestige among the workers in the trade should be drawn in so that they can give proper tone to the discussion and develop the comrades in the unit, always keeping in mind that building the Party is also the best means of strengthening the union. Attention must be given by the section leadership to these important tasks. Particular stress should be laid on educational work and recruiting, for which we have the greatest possibility through the industrial units.

Through such means we can hasten the building of the Party, increase our influence in the trade union movement, help to build a mass Labor Party and develop a core of Party leaders in the trade unions who will not only know how to advance the Party trade union line but will know how to use their influence and prestige in the union to advance our Party and the revolutionary movement generally.

We Move Into the Streets!

How a Branch Organized and Carried Through an Election Campaign

PHILIP DAVID and JOE FIELDS, *New York*

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR, Section 18 reorganized its nine street units to form three assembly district branches. It quickly became obvious that the branches were too large—more than 100 members in two of them, over 70 in the other. There was no intimate contact between the leadership and the rank and file. The leadership of the branches was not strong enough to guide and activize so large a membership.

We decided that the assembly district branches would have to be split into smaller and more mobile bodies. However, we did not want to carry out any hasty division without first creating the most favorable conditions. At the same time, by bringing forward, activizing and developing new comrades in the election campaign work, we would have available enough forces to give good leadership to two smaller, well-knit branches when each of the large assembly district branches was ready to split.

With the election campaign approaching, we made *concentration* the basis of all our election campaign plans. Of our three assembly district branches, we selected the 9th Assembly District for concentration because, first, in this territory was concentrated the largest population of unemployed workers, including thousands of Negroes and, second, some mass basis of support had already been created in this neighborhood through our work in the past.

We came forward before the branch with a *plan of action* worked out to the last detail. The plan was received enthusiastically by the entire membership because it involved a *majority* of the membership in actual work, and drove home for the first time our function as an open political organization, similar in this respect to the Democratic or Republican Parties, and using the same organizational methods.

Here is the plan in brief:

1. Out of the whole assembly district, *we selected five election districts in which to concentrate.* These were the 20th, 21st, 23rd, 24th and 25th election districts, the most proletarian in character, covering five and half square blocks in all.

2. We selected a captain for each election district. Most of the captains were members of the bureau or leading members of the branch.

3. We selected a committee of three, four, or five comrades to work under the captain of each election district, depending on the character and importance of the block. These election district committees, each under the guidance of its captain, organized a regular schedule of canvassing teams, some of the committees sending out four and fives teams a week to cover each election district *at least twice before election day.* Each committee was given a map of its election district, with every house number indicated. Each team was asked to keep and submit regular reports on every apartment canvassed, with name, reception, character of questions asked, results, etc.

4. The past difficulty of organizing and giving *Daily Worker* assignments at a branch meeting was removed because the responsibility for this work was placed on the election district committees and their canvassing teams. The result was that the *Daily Worker* order jumped from an average of 100 to 340 the first week that the plan was put into action. The average during the course of the campaign was 250 issues of the *Daily Worker* distributed by 22 canvassing teams.

5. An election campaign headquarters was established in a store in the heart of a Negro territory and bordering on an Irish neighborhood. For the first time the branch came forward in the neighborhood as a recognized political party, with a big sign running across the length of the window front *"Election Campaign Headquarters, Communist Party, 9th Assembly District".* Hundreds of workers came into the headquarters in the course of the campaign for free literature, to ask questions and express sympathy for our program. A house committee was set up to keep the headquarters open from 9 A.M. to 12 P.M. *We moved into the streets!*

6. Two street meetings a week were organized, many of them using a loud speaker. These were apart from the Minor and Amter mass meetings at which from six hundred to a thousand people were present. It is interesting to note that where the branch had only two street speakers available before the campaign, *seven* were developed in the course of the campaign. The

Daily Worker, literature, and recruiting cards were distributed or sold at every meeting.

7. Planned leaflet distribution was organized through the establishment of a regular leaflet distribution committee of eight comrades who concentrated on this work, met regularly and planned their distribution on a territorial and time basis. This, of course, was apart and in addition to the work of the election district committees.

8. A majority of the membership who were not activized in one or another of the above committees, were drawn into some other form of election work, such as attendance at street meeting, raising finances, follow-up of contacts, filling in on some of the committees, etc. In all, about 60 per cent of the membership participated in the election work, the rest being unable to do so because they were active functionaries in trade unions or other mass organizations.

9. Hundreds of banners, posters, signs and streamers of our candidates and slogans were printed immediately.

Results of Activity

The results of this plan of action were as follows:

1. The enthusiasm of the comrades was high. They showed a willingness to work and to work hard when the work was organized for them.

2. We succeeded in penetrating the most proletarian neighborhood in the assembly district, making friends with the workers, learning their problems, giving them an understanding of our Party and program. In the first meeting called by the section bureau to check up on the work of the election district committees, we found we had discovered 160 sympathetic contacts in the five concentration election districts *in ten days work.*

3. The election campaign headquarters became a real neighborhood center, buzzing with activity. There was an endless flow of new people coming in whom we had never seen before. Signs like "Welcome", "Free Literature Inside" and the program of our local candidate for assemblyman, a Negro worker who had lived twelve years on that street, awakened a real response among our neighbors. Many came to promise they would vote for him.

4. Large red and blue banners hung from 30 fire-escapes and window sills, calling on the people in the neighborhood to elect our candidate and "Vote Communist". Besides these, regular

posters of our candidate were to be seen in many stores on the block and in ground-floor and first-floor windows. Many hundreds of buttons of Browder and Ford were distributed on the street.

5. Recruiting. Invitation cards were printed and distributed by the canvassing teams to actual sympathetic contacts they had made in the course of their canvassing. The cards announced a meeting in the election headquarters at which a Communist Party member would speak. An invitation was also extended to the members of the local of the Workers Alliance on that street. the result was that nine Negro workers were recruited that night.

6. The attendance at branch meetings was unusually good during the course of the election campaign. Almost all those involved in the day-to-day work were present at every meeting.

7. The Communist Party became known far and wide in the neighborhood as a live, fighting political party. Its members and its program became known to new thousands who had only heard or read about us.

Conclusion

1. Concentration work in the proletarian election districts gives good results. We learned not to try to cover too much ground with limited forces. The membership is ready and willing to work, *if the work is organized for them* and if they are given planned guidance.

2. Concentration will be even more effectively organized when the branches are split into smaller and more mobile bodies. This has already been done in our Section.

3. The Ninth Assembly District obtained the greatest increase in votes of any assembly district in the five boroughs of Greater New York—115 per cent. The 20th election district brought in 46 votes, which was the highest in the entire section.

4. An unusual tribute was paid to the work of the Communist Party in these concentration districts by the old political parties. The Democratic Party was so alarmed that they saw fit to canvass the neighborhood, mostly a Negro neighborhood, with many first voters, instructing them that if they wanted to vote for Holmes, our candidate for assemblyman, to vote the straight "Star" ticket. Realizing the tremendous support and allegiance that the Party was getting they also sent out thousands of cards saying,

"Dear voter and comrade:

"The only man we have to fear is Landon. Roosevelt and Lehman are the men we must return to office.

"Communist Party, 98 West 99th St."

It happens that there is no such address.

5. The vote for the Communist Party cannot by any means be accepted as an indication either of the full value of concentration work, or of the full influence of the Communist Party in the neighborhood. The reasons are (a) the great number of first voters who were inexperienced and did not know how to manipulate the machine, (b) The high percentage of illiteracy in the neighborhood, (c) Intimidation at the polls, (d) The fraudulent methods used by the other political parties as explained above.

Despite all this, the Party was able to more than double its vote for assemblyman—reaching a total of 897.

6. The election district form of concentration must be the year-round method of branch work. This will do away with the necessity for setting up an elaborate new machine each election campaign.

7. Looking forward to the time when a number of branches will necessarily have to exist in each assembly district, with a corresponding increase in the penetration of the neighborhoods, we can say that each branch should be based on a small number of proletarian election districts which will be expanded and added to through recruiting. The work of the branches should be coordinated by regular, though not necessarily frequent, meetings of the branch leadership within each assembly district to plan, systematize and control the activities.

8. All the above is merely a confirmation of the correctness of the Ninth Convention Resolution on organization which calls for branches based on political divisions and sub-divisions of territory to consist of approximately 50 members, a body at once mobile enough and powerful enough to become a vital factor in the political life of the neighborhood, capable of rallying the neighborhood people to our program, and involving them in the struggle for their own needs and interests.

AGIT-PROP SECTION

Outline for New Members' Classes

Prepared by Education Commission, C.C.

THE FOLLOWING OUTLINE for new members' classes is designed for the use of instructors who must furnish systematic guidance to Party members in a short time. The outline will furnish a point of departure for the instructors so that the content and level of instruction will be uniform and not vary with each individual. At the same time it must be emphasized that the instructor should not follow the outline blindly. He should implement its general directives with personal initiative, with local material, and above all with issues that affect the Party members directly and with which they are familiar out of their own experience. This means that it is essential that the instructor should know thoroughly the social composition and interests of the students so that the class work will follow their greatest needs and not be something artificial imposed upon them.

The instructor should not monopolize the time, but should leave ample room for the fullest discussion by the students. It would be well for him to limit the discussion to twenty minutes out of the hour or hour and a half devoted to a session of the class. The rest of the period should be devoted to student discussion. Upon the basis of the discussion and the questions of the students, the instructor should mold the character of the following lesson. It goes without saying that the instructor should come to each class fully prepared from every point of view. We recommend as a reading list the following:

The Communist Manifesto,
The Program of the Communist International,
Resolutions of Seventh World Congress, C.I.,
Resolutions of Ninth Convention, C.P., U.S.A.,
What is Communism? by Earl Browder,
The Negro Question in the United States by James S. Allen.

In addition, the appropriate works of Marks, Engles, Lenin and Stalin, and the fundamental documents of the Communist

International and the Communist Party of the U. S. should be used wherever they are most effective.

Lesson I

CONDITIONS IN THE U. S. AND THE PLATFORM OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

1. Introduction by instructor.
2. The international scene—danger of war, fascism.
3. Description of United States—size, population, etc.
   (a) Geography of the U. S.
   (b) Industrial and agricultural regions.
   (c) Population—native-born, foreign-born, Negroes.
   (d) Wealth of the U. S.—industrial equipment, machinery, banks, farms, etc.

   (*Instructor should use maps, geographic and industrial, of the U. S.*)
4. Conditions of the American population.
   (a) The rich.
   (b) Industrial workers.
   (c) Farmers.
   (d) Negroes.
   (e) Professionals and white collar workers.
   (f) Youth.
   (g) Women.

   (*Questions of unemployment, insecurity, profits and military preparations to be connected with this section.*)
5. Organizations of the capitalist class.
   (a) Political parties.
   (b) Chambers of Commerce, Bankers' Associations, Manufacturers' Associations, Liberty League.
   (c) Methods of mass influence—the press, church, school, radio.
   (d) Strike-breaking agencies, vigilantes, Black Legion, Ku Klux Klan, etc.
6. Organizations of the working class.
   (a) Trade unions.
   (b) Mass organizations.
   (c) Working class parties.

7. What Wall Street is trying to do—moving to reaction and fascism to defend profits and rule.

Lesson II

ORIGIN OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND ITS TASKS. CLASS STRUGGLE VS. CLASS COLLABORATION.

1. When did classes of society come into existence?
   (a) Primitive communism.
   (b) Society divided into those who own the means of production and those who depend upon means of production for a living.
   (c) Difference of interests gives rise to the struggle of classes.
2. What is capitalism?
   (a) How capitalism begins (manufacture and wage-workers).
   (b) The profit motive and competition.
   (c) How all the wealth of the capitalists comes from the labor of the working class.
3. How the struggle between the working class and the capitalist class originated and developed.
   (a) Wage slavery.
   (b) Insecurity of existence and the constant threat of unemployment.
   (c) Counter-offensive by workers against capitalists—organization of trade unions.
   (d) Attacks by capitalist class—laws, forced arbitration, etc.
   (e) The struggles of the workers—strikes, demonstrations, clashes with police, armed struggles.
4. How Karl Marx developed the theory of proletarian emancipation.
   (a) Analyzed capitalism and showed how socialism is the next stage in society.
   (b) Showed that socialism can come about only through the organization of the proletarian revolution and never automatically.
   (c) Organized the first Communist Party whose members are the most advanced, class conscious and fighting section of the working class.
5. Karl Marx organized the First International (1864).

(a) Showed how the task of the working class "can only be accomplished by the working class itself".
(b) Laid basis for correct trade union policy.
(c) The development of working class parties—Germany, France, England—all over the world.

6. The Paris Commune (1871).
(a) The first dictatorship of the proletariat.
(b) Showed that capitalist dictatorship must be abolished and replaced with proletarian dictatorship.

7. The formation of the Second International (1889).
(a) The work of the Second International.
(b) How most of its leaders gradually distorted the ideas of Marx.
(c) How Lenin fought against their opportunism.

(*Instructor should explain the meaning of reformism and opportunism.*)

8. The epoch of imperialism and the formation of the Bolshevik Party.
(a) The era of trusts and monopolies.
(b) Lenin organizes the Bolshevik Party in opposition to the treacherous policy of most of the leaders of the Second International.
(c) The World War and the betrayal of the workers by Social-Democracy.
(d) The triumph of the Bolshevik Party.

9. The formation of the Communist International.
10. Program of the Communist International.

Lesson III

THE STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

1. The structure of the Party flows from the tasks of the Party.
(a) Organizational structure—the result of the experiences of the revolutionary movement.

(*See Stalin*: *Foundations of Leninism*, Chap. 8.)

2. The basic principles of Party organization.
(a) Democratic centralism.
i. Leadership elected from below.
ii. Subordination of the minority to the majority.
iii. Subordination of lower bodies to the higher bodies.
(b) Iron Party discipline.

Lesson V

THE STRUGGLE FOR NEGRO LIBERATION

1. The condition of the Negro people in the U. S.
   (a) In the South.
      I. Plantation system.
      II. Sharecroppers and tenant farmers.
      III. Denial of political and social rights.
   (b) In the North.
      I. Lowest pay and hardest jobs.
      II. Discrimination, segregation, etc.
      III. Denial of opportunities.
2. The Negro people as an oppressed nation—the meaning of the slogan: Self-determination for the Black Belt.
3. The struggle for complete social, political and economic equality.
4. The role of the Negro people in the struggle against fascism.
   (a) The Negro in the trade unions.
   (b) The Negro in the farm organizations.
5. National Negro Congress—its significance for Negro liberation and the building of a Farmer-Labor Party.
6. Communist Party platform on Negro rights.

Full-Time Training Schools in California

H. KEAN

AN ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT MEDIUM of bringing forward leaders in the Party is the full-time training school. In California this question has been considered seriously and the state committee has already conducted two full-time training schools as a step in the direction of carrying out the state convention decision of training 100 comrades by January, 1937. The state committee and the education commission are now preparing for a third school which will mean the successful realization of our state convention decision.

Running for a period of three weeks, the two previous schools, one in Los Angeles County, and one in the Bay Area

(San Francisco, Oakland and surrounding counties), trained a total of fifty-four Party members. Those chosen to attend the schools were recommended by their sections and admitted only after a very careful selection by a special school committee in each area on which was included a representative of the state education commission.

The schools had a proletarian composition consisting of twenty-five trade unionists, of whom fourteen were from the maritime unions, fifteen women, nine Negroes, twelve Y.C.L.-ers, one Chinese, one Japanese, and one Filipino comrade. In contrast to the Bay Area school with nineteen trade unionists in attendance, the Los Angeles school had only six. The Los Angeles section has recognized this weakness and will take steps to lay the main stress upon the selection of more trade union and shop comrades for future schools.

Special care was taken to give the comrades an elementary theoretical training and an understanding of the practical application of the decisions of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International to conditions in the United States. The subjects taught in the schools dealt with: the Two Worlds, socialism in the Soviet Union and decaying capitalism; Surplus Value and Wages; Imperialism and the General Crisis of Capitalism; Proletarian Revolution and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat; Socialist Construction in the Soviet Union; Imperialist War; Fascism; the Farmer-Labor Party; Trade Union Problems; the Negro Question; the Young Communist League; the Communist Position in 1936, based on the National Convention decisions; and Organizational Problems.

A special feature of the schools was the manner in which they were conducted. They functioned as Party units, with a leading Party member as director, who was at the same time responsible for the entire organization and functioning of the school. The important practical and political problems of the Party were taught by leading comrades in charge of these respective fields of work in the Party.

The schools were divided into squads of five. In these squads a portion of time was devoted to assigned individual reading; another portion given over to discussion and clearing up points in the reading and lectures; and the final portion used in the preparation of reports that were given by certain designated members of the squad before the class as a whole. During the school each member made several reports. In this preparation the whole squad participated, and suggestions and

criticisms were given to the comrade reporting in order to help him give the best report. The result was that each report was a collective piece of work. Reports were carefully graded, with the entire squad held responsible for the quality of the reports. This helped to develop competition between squads.

Special attention was given to the individual problems of each comrade, his weaknesses and his strong points, ability to work with others, his capacity for special work, his adaptability, etc. Toward the end of the school the squads discussed each of their members and reported their recommendations to the person in charge. This person interviewed each member of the school, discussing with each comrade and his squad the recommendation of the squad and her own observations, with suggestions for correcting faults and improving on good qualities that would ultimately mean more effective work on the part of the individual. The final day of the school was devoted to presenting an analysis of each student before the entire school for discussion and comment. Party self-criticism was freely used, and all felt that this was an effective method of forging skilled and technically trained comrades.

The schools closed with "graduation exercises" where the work of the schools was reviewed. These exercises were colorful and important features of the school work, bringing the results of the school to large numbers, who participated in such activity for the first time.

Plans are under way for a third and last school. This school will last five weeks instead of three and will be on a state-wide basis. We have launched a drive to raise $2,000 for its continuance and maintenance. The school will be conducted in a manner similar to that used in previous schools with the same type of training but on a more complete scale as the school will be conducted for a longer period. The aim is to get at least twenty trade unionist and shop workers; five women, eight Negroes, two Mexicans, one Chinese, one Japanese, and six Y.C.L.'ers, a total of forty in all.

By January, 1937, we shall have trained approximately 100 comrades. Already fifty-four of these are doing more effective work than they did prior to attending the schools. About Christmas, we shall have an assembly of as many former students of these three schools as possible. Each one will report on his or her work since the school. Here we shall get a good index of how effective full-time training schools have been in bringing forward leading personnel in our Party.

TWO KEYS TO PARTY POLICY

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